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843 431 firstlings), and was perpetuated long after the natives were converted to Christianity. After the food was removed, the pit of the oven was carefully filled in so that no rats could get into it, for if any food scraps were taken by a rat, the child would die. The father of the pregnant woman could make an earth oven and present it to the husband's relatives, but this gift had no ceremonial value.

DELIVERY

844 Before delivery a black stone was heated in an open fire, wrapped in bulrushes, and put under the parturient. This practice was supposed to stimulate labor pains (121, pp. 659-660). My informants did not give any information about this custom.

A woman in labor delivers in a squatting position. She kneels on the floor, reclining against her husband, who assumes the same position behind her. The husband or some other person assists the parturient by holding her under her armpits and massaging her stomach with both hands crossed on the navel region. Relatives and friends gather in the house to comfort the woman.

At the moment of delivery the man who ties the navel cord (*tangata hahau pito*) is called in. The tying of the navel cord is sacred and must be performed according to ritual (pp. 64-65). At the present time only five persons on the island know how to bind the navel; they are Juan Tepano, Mateo Beriberi, Timoteo Pakarati, Santiago Pakarati, and Leon Rahoroa. The first knot (*hahau a te matau*, string of the right) is tied after the string has made transverse turns around the navel cord passing from left to right. After three more transverse turns passing from right to left, the second knot (*hahau patu maui*, string of the left) is tied. These knots keep the child's strength in his body. The navel cord is cut by a boy or girl (*kope* or *vie nagi pito*, young man or woman who bites the navel), who cuts with the teeth or an [465] obsidian knife—formerly they preferred to bite it. The cord cutter was paid with fowls and sweet potatoes. Sometimes he received a young cock which he could not kill lest the strength of the new-born child be destroyed. He could give the cock to a foreigner, but usually it was allowed to die with age. [787] Generally the cord cutter must tell what he dreamed the night before. If he saw cows or stars it was a favorable sign for the child. Anything related to the skies was a good sign, but falling stars or any falling thing was believed [845] to portend ill-luck. Modern Easter Islanders retain this belief in the significance of omens. The word *topa-tini* is used for children that are born by breech presentation.

●846 Most ceremonial customs dealing with disposal of the umbilical cord have become obsolete. In ancient times the wound was smeared with red ocher (*kica*) from a place called Te Tiamo, near Poike. Sometimes the umbilical cord and placenta were put into a calabash and taken to the shore by the

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child's paternal grandmother who threw them into the sea as she pronounced a charm (*ivi-atua*): "Ka oho, kangaro ki hiva!" (May it be lost in a foreign country!) Sometimes the cord was buried under stone, and a charm pronounced over it: "Ka noho hiohio koe i toou kainga!" (May you stay strong in your country!) The land in which the umbilical cord was concealed was tapu; if anyone trod upon it, his legs were covered with white spots (*kino*). Ahu Hanga-varevare, near Tahai, is one of the places where navel cords were hidden. In 1886 Easter Island natives told Thomson that the people who walked over certain rocks near Ana-hoi-hangaroa were afflicted with sore feet. Thomson (215, p. 484) remarks, "We received many solemn warnings in regard to it."

Immediately after birth the child was washed in a large calabash filled with warm water heated with hot stones. According to Knoche (121, p. 660) hot, flat stones were applied to the stomach of the mother after childbirth, to keep the waist without folds. I heard no mention of this custom and the pitiful condition of young women after several childbirths does not testify to the efficiency of this precaution. A woman who has had children is called *heipara*. The same word applies to a plant which produces young shoots.

BIRTH FEAST

A feast was celebrated on the day of the child's birth (*te topanga*). The father's family presented a gift of food to the mother's family. As at the pregnancy feast, the woman ate first or, at her suggestion, her husband started the meal. It was forbidden to cook sweet potatoes in the oven. The oven was tapu and refuse was buried carefully in the ground. Two feasts were given for the first-born child only, whose name was given by the father's brother or sister.

CHILDHOOD

A small child, until he is 6 months old, is a *pucpuc*; at 6 months he becomes a *poki-tua-huri* (child-who-can-turn). When the child was 6 or 7 months old, his father's brother cut his hair with an obsidian point (*mataa*). At the same time a brother or cousin of his mother gave him a basket containing three or five chickens. This ceremony was called *puoko varu* (hair cutting). When the child began to creep, a maternal uncle gave him a basket with fowls (*kete hakaraku*, basket of crawling). Another present was given to him when he put on his first breechcloth of tapa (*hami-haka-hune*). At 8 or 10 years of age he was tattooed on his legs. At this time his maternal uncle offered him 20 or 30 fowls called *moa o te kona* (fowls for the legs) which became tapu; they could not be eaten by the family but could be traded to a foreigner or transferred to another family, according to the rules of the *koro* (p. 346).

The child was surrounded by many tapus. His head was considered sacred

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755 757 The first part of the most common treatment consisted of steaming the sick man, a practice which may have had a magical significance. A ditch, as long as a man, was dug in the ground. Heated stones were scattered in the bottom and covered with a thick layer of banana leaves and grass upon which the patient was laid. Heat and steam were believed to have a favorable action upon his health. After the steaming, the *ivi-atua* completed the cure. First he entered the sick man's hut and stayed there for a long time, trying to learn which spirit had entered the patient. He then held a mysterious conversation with the god or demon who had taken possession of the man's body. This interview was considered very beneficial to the patient. If the demon proved reluctant to leave the sick man, the *ivi-atua* conducted a violent expulsion. The hut was closed; sometimes it was covered with a net. The *ivi-atua* chased the demon and, taking up the clothes of the sick man, he shouted, "Light a fire." Holding the object in which the demon was supposed to be, he ran toward the fire and threw his bundle into it. He remained beside the hearth until everything was burned; then he returned to his patient and said to him, "Now you are in good health." In a severe case the *ivi-atua* might burn the house. He stayed near the fire trying to capture the demon or to keep it in the flame. If, despite all his efforts, the patient died, death was attributed to another spirit (*ahuaku*) who had taken possession of him. The *ivi-atua* received food and carved objects of wood as reward for his services.

757 The medical art included much knowledge and many practices which were efficient aids in healing, and probably was far richer than our present information shows. Massage was used on tired people. Thomson (215, p. 571) tells that during his trip around the island he fell down completely exhausted several times. He yielded " . . . to the dexterous kneadings and frictions and palmings and pinchings of those skilled in the treatment," and adds that " . . . the hardfisted native is by no means gentle in the operation, but with palms and knuckles vigorously tests every muscle and tendon, as well as every joint of the vertebrae, until the exhausted patient sinks into a state of oblivious somnolence." A most popular method of removing stomach pains, especially those produced by starvation, was to bind a cord tightly around the waist. Another method was to pile on the stomach a large heap of stones. This [846] treatment is similar to that practiced by Easter Island women after childbirth in which they pressed their wombs with stones to prevent the formation of folds (121, p. 660).

278 The Easter Island pharmacopoeia was probably small. The flora of the island is extremely poor and I doubt if there are many plants with medical virtues. The present natives, when asked about their local drugs, mentioned only the introduced bamboo (*kohe*), which is said to be good for toothache when boiled or roasted and placed on the aching tooth. Thomson (215, p. 471) writes: "The thistle is bruised and applied to sores and ulcers, arrow-

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not as complete as they might be, and may tend to be weighted in that all four men were related in one way or another. However this paper, and one on trading techniques which I hope to publish at a future date, show quite clearly that advanced acculturation on the island is, for the most part, only material culture deep and has as yet penetrated only sporadically into the social organization of the people.

BIRTH

Except for a ceremony at the birth of a first child, there appears to be no regularized ritual for births as such. At the present moment an expectant mother either goes to the Naval-run hospital for delivery, or stays at home where her child is delivered with the aid of a midwife. I could learn of no pre-natal or post-parture taboos enforced on either the parents or the child. The rubbing of a fine red iron oxide powder into the baby's navel may have once had ceremonial significance but is now explained as merely an aid in the drying up of the umbilical cord.

It is apparently only the first child, especially a boy child, whose birth is fraught with a danger that must be assuaged by ceremony. Once the ceremony has been completed, however, a time for general celebration and feasting is immediately at hand.

Upon the occasion of the first birth to a married couple the father-in-law of the child's mother immediately prepares a small *umu*, i.e., a meal prepared in a pit oven, which is allowed to cook through the night. At the break of dawn on the following day the immediate families of both the child's parents open the *umu* but do not touch the inclosed food until the new mother has first partaken of it to "bring luck to her baby." After she has eaten this token meal, these relatives finish this initial *umu* and immediately begin preparations for a large *umu* feast for their friends and relatives in celebration of the birth. As with the inter-familial exchange of gifts at the time of a wedding, the respective families of the new parents each prepare their own *umu* and, upon its completion, present it to the opposite family, after which both meals are pooled for the general feasting of friends and relatives. Since such a feast may have to provide for a large portion of the population, each member of the extended family may be called upon to furnish a quantity of food in the form of chickens, eggs, *camotes* or sweet potatoes, etc. Even friends may be called upon and "if they have food beyond their needs they will give to the *umu*." Each friend or relative coming to the feast brings with him, or her, a small *umu* gift for the new mother. This usually consists of a small, wrapped bundle containing chicken or, perhaps, *camote*. It was never made